

Section I: OMAHA TRIBE ONLINE Information Technology Plan

Omaha Tribe of Nebraska
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Section II: Executive Summary

The Omaha Tribe proposes to contract with a national Native American consulting firm to facilitate the development of an information technology plan that will outline comprehensive goals to be used to enhance governmental, social, and economic infrastructures.

The plan will recommend specific directions and alternatives that the Tribe can pursue in the future with regard to maximizing certain telecommunication resources that might be unique and advantageous. The following are examples:

- **Development of a Geographical Information System** – web-based site providing information on land management and environmental issues
- **Improved web-based delivery of tribal enrollment services and data management** – interconnectivity with eligible enrollees' applications
- **Telemedicine** – improvement of web-based health care with Indian Health Services and state-wide hospitals and medical facilities
- **Distance learning** – web-based classroom participation from local community colleges and state-wide universities
- **Procurement** – web-based purchasing from vendors
- **Tribal News** – news digest, calendar of events, bulletin board
- **Governmental information** – tribal council minutes, non-proprietary documents, program information, significant historical & cultural notes
- **Employment opportunities** – web-based job recruitment
- **Development of potential e-commerce enterprises** – web-based information services and product availability

The consulting firm will also provide information on grant funds available for program continuation expansion. The information technology plan will be consistent with goals established by the State of Nebraska's information technology plan.

Another feature of the IT plan will be an examination of current federal and state legislation offering advantages to the Tribe in the development of

telecommunication projects, e.g., the Telecommunication Act of 1996 and the Broadband Internet Access Act of 2001, as well as LB 41, 89, 90, 463, and 827.

The consulting firm will recommend appropriate computer hardware and software and related peripherals, as well as personal costs required to establish and operate a web site program.

Section III: Goals and Objectives

Goal Statement: Develop a long-term, comprehensive Information Technology Plan that will contribute to the governmental, economic and social advancement of members of the Omaha Tribe.

Objective 1: Contract with the National Center for American Indian Enterprise Development to develop the Information Technology Plan by the end of the 12-month project period.

Activities:

- a. The Omaha Tribal Council and NCAIED will complete contract negotiations by the end of the 2nd month.
- b. NCAIED will perform an initial onsite visit to conduct an assessment of the Omaha Tribe and its resources by the end of the 3rd month.
- c. NCAIED will complete legislative research by the end of the 5th month.
- d. An initial draft of the IT plan will be submitted to the Tribal Council by the end of the 6th month.
- e. A final draft of the IT plan will be presented to the Tribal Council by the end of the 8th month.

The proposed goal corresponds to NITC-3: ***Determine a broad strategy and objectives for developing and sustaining information technology development in Nebraska, including long-range funding strategies...***

The proposed goal also corresponds to CC4: ***Facilitating IT development and innovation by raising awareness, sharing***

information, encouraging collaboration, and developing partnerships among public and between public and private entities.

Section IV: Scope and Objectives

Ultimately, Individuals who will derive direct benefit from the project will be members of the Omaha Tribe, i.e., providers and recipients of services. This is, of course, after the goals of the IT plan become reality.

The specific outcome of the proposed project as envisioned, is to have a comprehensive IT plan in hand that will be a directional guide to future telecommunication development on the Omaha Reservation. The IT plan will also serve as a documentary basis for the Tribe to solicit federal grants for the future creation and expansion of a fully operational IT Department.

The project's completeness can be ***measured*** by the finished project, i.e., the IT Plan. Project ***assessment*** can be gauged by the quality of the plan. For example, sufficient information and data should be contained in the plan that will allow the following questions to be answered in a satisfactory manner:

- Have needs and problem issues been fully identified?
- Are recommendations realistic?
- Are timeframes achievable?
- Does the plan provide pro forma data to develop and support an IT plan?
- Are cultural and historical notes accurate?
- Does the plan provide information on individuals responsible for implementation, evaluation, and possible modification?

There does not appear to be any tangible or intangible constraints that would hinder the progress or completion of the project since it is primarily information gathering and report generation.

Significant assumptions relating to the project include the following:

- The National Center for American Indian Enterprise Development (NCAIED) has a proven track record in the area of strategic plan development, especially where such assessments lead to new business formalization.

- That all tribal program personnel will be readily available to provide required investigative and research data.
- That the IT Plan will result in an immediate establishment of an IT program infrastructure.

Section V: Project Justification

The Omaha Tribe, primarily through its staff and governing body, do not yet possess the level of technical expertise or educational background to adequately describe or design a fully operational information technology program for the future, much less respond to the broad telecommunication issues that might affect them in a positive manner.

As a result of the unsuccessful response to the previous year's Community Technology Fund grant announcement, the Tribe now believes that certain fundamental weaknesses must be overcome before any information technology or telecommunication efforts can be undertaken. These weaknesses have been identified as follows:

- Lack of adequate technical training in information technology practices.
- Insufficient understanding of telecommunication issues.
- Inability to develop e-commerce initiatives.
- Absence of technical expertise to evaluate purchase options relating to the operation of appropriate hardware and software peripherals.
- Lack of a plan or policies to integrate governmental, social, and economic resources into an effective web-based platform.
- Inability to develop a comprehensive web site for the Tribe.
- Inadequate knowledge level of federal and state legislative telecommunication issues.

If the Tribe is to have a clear opportunity at responding to the deep and ever-widening **digital divide** that is evident, it must at least have an understanding of what the fundamental issues are in a telecommunication environment. This is a broad statement considering that almost every Nebraska community has long ago resolved many of their basic telecommunication concerns and the Tribe is still faced with the reality of starting from square one.

In terms of cost-benefit analysis and impact, the current proposal can only offer a **futuristic** glimpse of the potential of the IT Plan if implemented properly and adequately funded:

- The Tribe will possess state-of-the-art computer equipment and related resources allowing it to be a major telecommunication player in its region.
- IT Department staff will be fully trained.
- An award winning web site will be in operation.
- Several successful small e-commerce enterprises will have been developed, employing tribal members and realizing a satisfactory rate of return.
- The Tribe will rely on innovations in telemedicine to enhance the health care of its people.
- Distance learning will be an important educational tool for off-campus learning.

Section VI: Implementation

Because the proposed project does not consist of any real operational or programmatic activities at this stage, implementation involves only the gathering of information, research, analysis and presentation of a completed written document for future use by the Tribe.

Obviously, the Omaha Tribal Council, as sponsors and stakeholders of the project, believe this to be the proper and sound course of action to follow considering that very little alternative is available to them at this time. The Tribe does not have the funds or other resources to embark on any action resembling an ambitious activity related to telecommunications or information technology.

The Tribe hopes to contract with the National Center for American Indian Enterprise Development located in Meza, Arizona.¹ NCAIED, a national nonprofit organization with offices in Los Angeles, Phoenix, Seattle, and Atlanta, has been in existence since 1970. Its primary mission is: *To develop and expand an American Indian private sector which employs Indian labor, increases the number of tribal and individual Indian businesses, and positively impacts and involves reservation communities, by establishing business relationships between Indian enterprises and private industry.* The company has also been selected because of its strong cultural competency and sensitivity to tribal governments.

NCAIED staff and consultants have a proven track record in assisting Tribes and Indian organizations with the formation of economic development initiatives that includes business plan development, feasibility studies, entrepreneurial training, financial forecasting & budgeting, and commercial web page development.

The major milestone of this project will be the completion of a comprehensive Information Technology Plan by NCAIED with a completion period of 8 months.

¹ <http://www.ncaied.org>

There will be no training or staff development requirements associated at this stage, although the Tribe will assign the Tribal Planner to assist NCAIED with market research, collection of data, and associated activity related to the project (as an In-Kind matching contribution).

Section VII: Technical Impact

The IT Plan as envisioned, will describe the latest technology in hardware and software capabilities and their relationship to the unique needs of the Omaha Tribe in terms of bridging the gap of the digital divide. Strategies outlining the development, implementation, and continued growth of telecommunication efforts will be provided as reference.

The Plan will insure consistency with state wide institutional and infrastructure guidelines.

At a *minimum*, the IT Plan will contain the following components:

- Table of Contents
- Purpose
- Methodology
- Limitations
- Findings
 - Market Size
 - Market Structure, Major Competitors, Ranking, and Market Share
 - Distribution Systems
 - Imports/Exports
 - Important Industry Trends
 - Raw Materials Supply
 - Analysis of Financial Requirements and Returns
 - Analysis of Qualitative Requirements and Employment
- Conclusions and Recommendations
- Sources

Section VIII: Risk Assessment

Risks, if any, are minimal considering the nature of the project. If the project is not completed on time, the Tribe will have the option of granting an extension of four additional months, which is consistent with the Community Technology Fund period of 12 months.

Section IX: Financial Analysis and Budget

	CTF Grant Funding	Cash Match (5)	In-Kind Match (6)	Other Funding Sources (7)	Total
Personnel (1)			6,250		
Contractual Services					
• Design					
• Programming and Testing					
Project management, evaluation, and quality assurance					
Other (2)	25,000				25,000
Capital Expenses					
• Hardware Acquisition					
Software Acquisition					
Network costs					
Other					
Other Costs					
Telecommunications					
Supplies and materials					
Other operating (4)					
Travel					
Total	25,000		6,250		31,250